

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07
LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 /054 W
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R 272057Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3276
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION GENEVA

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USEEC AND USOECD ALSO FOR EMBASSIES

E.O. 11652 NA
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, SP
SUBJECT: LABOR PLANT ELECTIONS/THE SECOND WEEK

REF: MADRID 810

1. SUMMARY. AS THE SECOND WEEK OF JAN. 16-FEB. 6
(SURE TO BE EXTENDED) ELECTIONS FOR LABOR PLANT
COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES (AND "DELEGATES" IN
SMALLER FIRMS) ENDS, THE WAR OF STATISTICS CONTINUES
BETWEEN THE TWO LEADING UNIONS, THE SOCIALIST UGT
AND COMMUNIST-DOMINATED WORKERS' COMMISSIONS (SWC)
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OFFICIAL RESULTS ARE INCOMPLETE EVEN FOR THOSE
PLANTS WHERE POLLING HAS FINISHED, AND MANY OF THE
LARGEST COMPANIES HAVE YET TO VOTE. ON THE WHOLE,
RESULTS BEAR OUT EARLIER REPORTS OF A BATTLE BETWEEN
UGT AND SWC, IN WHICH THE SWC CONTINUES TO HAVE THE
ADVANTAGE THUS FAR. UGT IS DOING WELL IN THE LARGEST
COMPANIES,

WHILE THE MODERATE BASQUE STV UNION APPEARS TO BE CONSOLIDATING ITS TOP POSITION IN THE FOUR BASQUE PROVINCES WHERE IT OPERATES. END SUMMARY.

2. UNDER MEDIA PRESSURE, THE LABOR MINISTRY HAS BEGUN TO REPORT ELECTION RESULTS, BUT IS BEING VERY CAUTIOUS IN ASCRIBING UNION AFFILIATIONS TO WORKERS ELECTED AS INDIVIDUALS, AS IS THE NORM IN SMALLER PLANTS, RATHER THAN ON UNION TICKETS, AS IN THE LARGER FACTORIES. THUS, THE "OFFICIAL" RESULTS AS OF JANUARY 27 SHOW NEARLY HALF OF ALL THOSE ELECTED AS INDEPENDENTS OR "NOT IDENTIFIED", WHILE THE SWC AND UGT LEAD THE PACK WITH 21.1 AND 16.2 PERCENT RESPECTIVELY. UGT SECGEN NICOLAS REDONDO WAS QUOTED JANUARY 27 AS SAYING THAT THE LABOR MINISTRY FIGURES "DID NOT FIT WITH REALITY", SINCE IN MANY SMALL FIRMS THE MANAGEMENT HAD MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR WORKERS TO RUN UNDER A UNION LABEL. THIS OBVIOUSLY CUTS SEVERAL WAYS. WHILE MANY OF THE "UNIDENTIFIED" IN THE MINISTRY REPORTS MAY WELL BE UGT MEMBERS, THEY MAY ALSO BELONG TO THE SWC AND OTHER SMALLER UNIONS. BASED ON LATER DATA, THE CIFRA NEWS AGENCY REPORTED JANUARY 27 THAT THE SWC WAS LEADING WITH 37.7 PERCENT VERSUS UGT WITH 25.3, INDEPENDENTS WITH 11.6, THE STV WITH 8.8, USO WITH 6.8, THE MAOIST SU WITH 4.3, AND VARIOUS SMALLER UNIONS AROUND 1 PERCENT OR LOWER.

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3. GOING BY PROVINCE OR REGION, TO DATE, THE SWC APPEARS STRONGEST IN ALBACETE, HUELVA, LEON, CIUDAD REAL, GUADALAJARA, AND HUESCA. THE UGT APPEARS TO BE LEADING IN BURGOS, CADIZ, GRANADA, AND TENERIFE PROVINCES. THE CRUCIAL INDUSTRIAL BELTS OF ASTURIAS, MADRID, AND BARCELONA ARE STILL A SWC/UGT CONTEST, BUT THE SWC APPEARS TO HAVE THE EDGE. FOR MADRID, THE LATEST COUNT SHOWS 38 PERCENT FOR SWC VERSUS 25 PERCENT FOR UGT, WITH INDEPENDENTS OR UNIDENTIFIED TOTALLING 28 PERCENT.

4. IN THE BASQUE COUNTY, LATEST RESULTS FROM AMCONSULATE BILBAO SHOW THE MODERATE STV UNION LEADING WITH 28 PERCENT, FOLLOWED BY SWC WITH 23 AND UGT WITH 20. BILBAO PASSED ON THE OBSERVATION OF A KNOWLEDGEABLE LOCAL OBSERVER THAT THE SWC'S RELATIVE SUCCESS WAS DUE TO BETTER-KNOWN LEADERS ON THE SHOP FLOORS, ESPECIALLY OF THE SMALLER COMPANIES. SWC WAS THE ONLY UNION IN THE BASQUE AREA THAT COULD BE RELIED UPON TO MAKE A SERIOUS EFFORT IN VIRTUALLY ALL THE COMPANIES, AND THE MEMBERS SO ELECTED ADDED UP.

5. TURNING TO THE LARGEST COMPANIES NATIONWIDE

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LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 /054 W
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THAT HAVE VOTED, THE UGT IS THE APPARENT VICTOR (BY ONE REPRESENTATIVE) IN THE GIANT STATE-OWNED HUNOSA COAL MINES (NUMBER SIX EMPLOYER NATIONALLY). PARTIAL RESULTS FROM THE ASTILLEROS ESPANOLES SHIPYARDS (NINTH) SHOW UGT LEADING, AS DO SIMILARLY PARTIAL RESULTS FROM THE ALTOS HORNOS STEEL MILLS (THIRTEENTH, AND MINORITY OWNED BY U.S. STEEL). WORKERS AT THE ASTANO AND BAZAN (FOURTEENTH) SHIPYARDS VOTED FOR NEW PLANT COMMITTEES LAST FALL, IN BOTH CASES GIVING THE SWC WORKING CONTROL. WORKERS AT ASTANO HAVE NOW REJECTED NEW ELECTIONS, AND IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT BAZAN WORKERS WILL DO LIKEWISE. UGT ENJOYS A SIMILAR POSITION AT

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THE SEAT AUTO COMPANY (THIRD), WHERE ELECTIONS LAST FALL GAVE THE SOCIALIST UNION AN IMPORTANT VICTORY, BUT THEY ARE REPORTEDLY WILLING TO CHANCE NEW ELECTIONS ANYWAY, CLAIMING THEY CAN FURTHER CONSOLIDATE THEIR POSITION. STANDARD ELECTRONICA (COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT, MAJORITY OWNED BY ITT, ELEVENTH LARGEST NATIONALLY WITH 19,000 WORKERS AND THE LARGEST AMERICAN EMPLOYER IN SPAIN) WILL NOT VOTE UNTIL ABOUT FEBRUARY 14. THE EXISTING PLANT COMMITTEE AT STANDARD IS SWC-CONTROLLED, AND MANAGEMENT PREDICTED TO EMBASSY JANUARY 27 THAT THE COMMUNISTS WOULD WIN THE UPCOMING ELECTION AS WELL, THOUGH THE UGT HAS COME UP SOMEWHAT.

6. THE EMBASSY WILL RESERVE A DETAILED BREAKDOWN OF ELECTION RESULTS FOR A LATER DATE, WHEN MORE RESULTS ARE IN. WE NOTE IN PASSING THAT THE INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST USO TRADE UNION IS RUNNING FAR BEHIND THE LEADERS IN FIFTH PLACE, BUT WITH SOME LOCALLY-SIGNIFICANT STRENGTH. FOR EXAMPLE, USO TOPPED THE POLL AT THE WESTINGHOUSE PLANT AND OLARRA INDUSTRIES IN BILBAO, THOUGH FALLING SHORT OF A MAJORITY IN EITHER CASE. THE "MAOIST" CSUT AND SU UNIONS ALSO HAVE SOME SCATTERED SUPPORT. OVERHANGING ALL THE RESULTS REPORTED THUS FAR, HOWEVER, ARE THE LARGE NUMBERS OF INDEPENDENT AND "UNIDENTIFIED" WORKERS ELECTED. EXTRAPOLATING FROM THE ADMITTEDLY INCOMPLETE DATA AVAILABLE, THE MOST LIKELY OUTCOME FOR THE PLANT ELECTIONS NOW APPEARS SWC AND UGT AS ONE-TWO (BUT NEITHER CLOSE TO BEING THE HEGEMONIC TRADE UNION OF SPAIN), WITH A SIZE-ABLE SHARE OF INFLUENCE FOR THE STV AND SOME LESSER UNIONS, AND A FAIR NUMBER OF GENUINE INDEPENDENTS. STABLER

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